IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below, in which deleted terms are indicated by strikethrough and/or double brackets, and added terms are indicated by underscoring. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1.   (Currently Amended) A ranging apparatus which determines distances to objects by using planar positions of said objects in images which are obtained by plural image acquiring [[means]] devices comprising:

plural cameras that function as said plural image acquiring [[means]] devices,

plural distortion correction [[means]] devices to correct distortion of images taken by said cameras wherein said plural distortion correction [[means]] devices progressively determine ranging distances of a target object,

a corrective computation [[means]] device which generates corrected images by using said distortion correction [[means]] devices, being corrected for eliminating distortion caused by optical systems used for said cameras, corresponding to said progressively determined ranging distances in which said images are taken by said image acquiring [[means]] devices,

a corrected image selection [[means]] device which selects a most appropriately corrected image among said corrected images and;

a ranging computation [[means]] device which computes a distance to said object viewed in said corrected image selected by said corrected image selection [[means]] device.

2.   (Currently Amended) A ranging apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein

said corrected image selection [[means]] device selects a corrected image which has

best coincidency between said object specified in reference images which are corrected images,

being generated by said corrective computation [[means]] device, of said acquired images taken

by one of said cameras and said object specified in comparison images which are corrected

images, being generated by said corrective computation [[means]] device, of said acquired

images taken by another of said cameras,

of which said coincidency is evaluated for picture elements that compose an image of

said object in said reference image against an image of said object that is searched over picture

elements, being included in said comparison image, corresponding to an area shifted by a

parallax to said object given for said progressively determined ranging distance in which said

reference image and said comparison image are generated.

3.   (Currently Amended) A ranging method which determines distances to objects by using

planar positions of said objects in images which are obtained by cameras comprising:

a first step wherein said cameras take images of a target object,

a second step wherein plural corrected images are generated from images acquired by

said cameras after eliminating distortion caused by optical systems of said cameras, wherein said

distortion is computed by plural distortion correction [[means]] devices which progressively

determine ranging distances of said object,

a third step wherein a corrective image is selected among plural corrective images

generated in said second step; and

a fourth step wherein ranging distance to said object in said corrected image selected in

said third step is computed.

4.   (Currently Amended) A ranging program by which a computer system determines

distances to objects by using planar positions of said objects in images which are obtained by

cameras, wherein said ranging program includes operations of:

correcting distortion of images taken by cameras using plural distortion correction

[[means]] devices, wherein said plural distortion correction [[means]] device progressively

determine ranging distances of a target object,

generating corrected images using said distortion correction [[means]] devices, being

corrected for eliminating distortion caused by optical systems of said cameras, corresponding to

said progressively determined ranging distances in which said images are taken by said cameras,

selecting a most appropriately corrected image among said corrected images and;

computing a distance to said object viewed in said selected corrected image.

5.   (Currently Amended) A ranging method according to Claim 3, wherein;

said third step involves selecting a corrected image which has best coincidency between

said object specified in reference images which are corrected images, being generated in said

second step, of said images taken by one of said cameras in said first step and said object

specified in comparison images which are corrected images, being generated in said second step,

of said images taken by another of said cameras,

of which said coincidency is evaluated for picture elements that compose an image of

said object in said reference image against an image of said object that is searched over picture

elements, being included in said comparison image, corresponding to an area shifted by a

parallax to said object given for said progressively determined ranging distance in which said

reference image and said comparison images are generated.

6.   (Previously presented) A ranging program according to Claim 4, wherein;

said selecting operation selects a corrected image which has best coincidency between said object specified in reference images which are corrected images, being generated in said generating operation, of said images taken by one of said cameras and said object specified in comparison images which are corrected images, also generated in said generating step, of said images taken by another of said cameras,

of which said coincidency is evaluated for picture elements that compose an image of said object in said reference image against an image of said object that is searched over picture elements, being included in said comparison image, corresponding to an area shifted by a parallax to said object given for said progressively determined ranging distance in which said reference image and said comparison image are generated.

7.   (Currently Amended) A ranging apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion correction [[means]] devices comprise a distortion correction table prepared in advance for said cameras.

8.   (Currently Amended) A ranging apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion correction [[means]] devices comprise distortion correction tables prepared in advance for said cameras, respectively.

9.   (Currently Amended) A ranging method according to Claim 3, wherein said distortion

correction [[means]] <u>devices</u> comprise a distortion correction table prepared in advance for said cameras.

10.   (Currently Amended) A ranging method according to Claim 3, wherein said distortion correction [[means]] <u>devices</u> comprise distortion correction tables prepared in advance for said cameras, respectively.

11.   (Currently Amended) A ranging program according to Claim 4, wherein said distortion correction [[means]] <u>devices</u> comprise a distortion correction table prepared in advance for said cameras.

12.   (Currently Amended) A ranging program according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion correction [[means]] <u>devices</u> comprise distortion correction tables prepared in advance for said cameras, respectively.